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MONTANA

NEWS

STATE DOCUMENTS

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SOCIAL AND REHABILITATION SERVICES

Successor to the Senior Citizen News

VOLUME 1

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER, 1972



NUMBER 6

Governors Conference Is a Success



GOVERNOR HONORED—Barclay Craighead, left, is shown presenting retiring Governor Forrest H. Anderson, center, with a plaque honoring him for his aid to the Senior Citizen programs in Montana. Associate Justice Gene B. Daly looks on.

Officials, Dignitaries Air Their Thoughts To Senior Listeners

Political power for Senior Citizens comes only with organization, know-how, and persistence, according to several speakers at the Governor's Conference on Aging.

Clifford Brennan, Ph.D., of the University of Montana pointed out that the aged have been slower than other minority groups to get organized.

"You must assert yourselves collectively," he told his audience. Otherwise, he indicated, social legislation benefitting Seniors is apt to go down the drain for want of support. He said further that many Seniors are poorly informed about existing programs such as food stamps.

Henry Loble, Helena attorney and professional lobbyist, said the new constitution will cause the advent of "professional legislators" in place of the part time legislators of past years. These legislators, he said, will be vulnerable to a "blood, sweat and tears" campaign of constituent pressure to support desired legislation.

Veteran Pensions Cut

It appears that the present session of Congress will not take any steps to change the Veteran Administration pension laws this year, according to David W. Armstrong, administrator of the Veterans Affairs Division.

This means that veterans or their widows receiving Veterans Administration pensions will have their pensions reduced effective

January 1, 1973 due to the recent 20% increase in Social Security. The average social security increase is approximately \$26.50 per month. The average loss in Veterans Administration non-service connected pension payments due to the social security increases will be \$7.50 per month.

Total allowable countable in-
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COMMENT -

by Lyle Downing



Montana's long-awaited launching of a \$500,000 nutrition program was given a serious setback a few days ago when President Nixon disapproved the Labor-HEW Appropriations Bill. The nutrition funding was included in this measure.

John B. Martin, United States Commissioner on Aging, has informed us that we can fund some nutrition programs on a limited basis out of Title III funds which are currently available. The Aging Services Division now is operating under a congressional continuing resolution which keeps our spending at the 1972 level until Congress re-enacts the Older Americans Act amendments and the Labor-HEW Appropriations Bill.

When Congress goes back into session in January it will be a new ball game.

We want to take this opportunity to congratulate approximately 600 Montana Senior Citizens who traveled to Helena in September for the fourth annual Governor's Conference on Aging. We received many comments on the Conference which described it as the best one held in the state.

The Aging Services Division held the first of a series of Senior Citizens center workshops at Carroll College in Helena October 17-19. Forty-one center directors, as well as social workers and other related persons attended the workshop. At least four other workshops will be held in the next few months. The curriculum for the

Helena workshop was formulated by Wayne Miller, staff development specialist for the State Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services. Among the faculty

were Edward Bates, associate professor, Department of Sociology, Carroll College, and Dr. Clifford Brennan, Sociology Professor at the University of Montana.

Writing Taught Seniors

Recalling and recording the past can be a rewarding experience for Senior Citizens under a project designed by Ms. Leone Noble Western, a Washington teacher.

Ms. Western is the author of a manual, *How to Write Your Life Story*, which she developed in teaching creative writing to Senior Citizens in Puyallup, Wash.

She says writing about old times is very therapeutic for many Seniors, and greatly improves their morale.

As the project spread from Puyallup to retirement homes and schools throughout Washington, she said many elderly persons got involved in writing when they attended classes purely for companionship, with no thought of actively participating.

In her manual she writes of one "very shaky elderly lady" who read her first assignment aloud and then said, "At first I did not think I could possibly do the actual writing, but I find it has oiled up my rusty old brain."

Ms. Western's book, actually an instruction manual, contains 40 pages, divided into 10 assignments. The assignments contain suggestions on how to jog the memory and get started writing about various topics of bygone days. Marriage, childhood Christmases of long ago, parents, reli-

gion, health problems, all are the subjects of individual assignments.

Besides being good therapy, the writing of life histories contributes much to historical knowledge. In Butte, a member of the Senior Center, Jake Ostberg, has authored *Sketches of Old Butte*, a collection of 51 essays on the citizenry of Butte in the old days.

Included in Ostberg's book are pieces on Straightback Dan, Nickle Annie, Red Neck Kelly, Policy Chief Jerry "The Wise" Murphy, Terrible Turk, a tamale salesman, and Dublin Dan, a saloon keeper, with many others no less notable.

Ostberg's book was printed in Butte, and has sold several hundred copies already. Profits go to the Senior Center in Butte.

The success of Ostberg's book is an example of what the reminiscences of Seniors can produce. Ms. Western's publication offers other old timers the guidance necessary to tell their stories.

The manual is entering the second printing and will soon be available at two dollars a copy from Ms. Western at Box 1004, Port Angeles, Washington 98362.

Ms. Western says she will soon retire, after which she will be available to lecture to Senior writing classes.

The Veteran's Administration reports nearly three million veterans and servicemen have trained under the current GI Bill since June, 1966.

(Continued from Page One)

STATE OF MONTANA

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Veterans Pensions

come for Veterans Administration pension purposes will remain \$2,600.00 per year for those with out dependents and \$3,800.00 per year for those with dependents.

It is anticipated that legislation will be introduced into Congress to change the Veterans Administration Pension Laws as soon as the effects of the broad benefits bill H.R.1. will have on incomes are known.

In any event it is more than likely that Veterans Administration pension checks due February 1, 1973 will be smaller.

The SRS News staff needs help with its mailing list. We know that some subscribers are inadvertently getting two copies. Also, many copies go to the last known address of persons now deceased. If you are getting two copies, or know of copies going to waste because they are mailed to deceased persons, would you let us know? Please include the mailing labels if possible when requesting changes of address, or termination of subscription.

Governor's Conference Successful

Senior Citizens could contribute to such a campaign by paying close attention to action in the legislature, sending letters and telegrams, placing telephone calls to representatives or attending and testifying at hearings on desired bills.

AFL-CIO Director James Murry outlined the struggles of the union in seeking political power, and advocated formation of a coalition among union members, Senior Citizens, the poor, and other minorities facing common problems.

Senior Citizens and union members have many of the same interests, he said, adding, "We would be more effective if we spoke with one voice."

He noted also that Montana has over 132,000 persons over 55, many of whom are not registered to vote. Often, he said, the superior voting record of Senior Citizens turns out to be a myth. Voter registration drives among the aging are urgent, he said.

Willa Dale Evans of Roundup issued a heated attack on Medicare and the medical profession.

Responding to earlier charges that Medicare was deficient in some particulars, she said, "It's worse than that. It's a farce." Continuing, she noted recent alleged irregularities by dentists collecting under Medicaid and said, "It isn't the welfare recipient that's stealing the country blind."

The \$100 million in nutrition funds is a "drop in the bucket" she said, providing only \$25 per year per Senior Citizen for nutrition. She pointed out that nutritional deficiencies among Seniors are a major cause of poor health and expensive hospital stays.

In conclusion she said, "If we can spend \$375 billion for a war in Vietnam, we should be able to take care of our grandmothers and grandfathers."

Earl Lawlor, social security representative, said local social security offices will refer questions to whatever agency handles their particular type of problem.

Cascade County Commissioner John W. St. Jermain pointed out that passage of legislation allowing county commissioners to levy up to one mill for Senior activities has not been an unmixed blessing.

When tax money becomes available, he said, United Fund money and service club help tends to diminish or vanish. "We should continue to get matching funds from the federal and state government," he said.

At the conclusion of the several sessions, Senior Citizens were on the record favoring expanded coverage under Medicare, extension of the Foster Grandparent Program to allow "grandparents" to care for other Seniors in their own homes, and a freeze in utility rates for Seniors on a fixed income.

Agency representatives pointed out that most of the called for changes would require new laws, and agreed it was the responsibility of Seniors to get the proper laws passed.

Free Leaflet Offered

Copies of a new and expanded Medicare leaflet, "How to Claim Medical Insurance Benefits," are available upon request from district social security offices.

The leaflet includes information on how Medicare determines the "reasonable charge" for physicians' services.

Under Medicare regulations a medical charge is considered reasonable if it is no higher than the doctor customarily charges all his patients, Medicare and non-Medicare, and if it is no higher than charges made for the same service by other doctors in the same locality in three out of four cases.

Green Thumb Offers Work, Service

The problem of empty pockets and empty hours has been at least partly solved for 112 Montana men working under Green Thumb, a Department of Labor project employing Senior Citizens.

Under the program, men over 55 are paid two dollars an hour for up to 100 hours yearly to do various types of maintenance work.

For example, a crew of Helena Green Thumb men working under the state's division of architecture and engineering recently spent several days on the capitol grounds planting shrubs to spell out "Montana" just down from the General Meagher statue.

One member of the crew, Nick Andersen, 75, described the income from Green Thumb as "just a little cream in your coffee." Although the Green Thumb wages are not enough to live on, he said, they are a very useful addition to the slim social security payments which are the total income of many retired Montanans.

Margaret Bucher, Green Thumb director for Montana, said the average income of families with members in Green Thumb is \$725 per year, outside of the Green Thumb wages.

Ms. Bucher said the average age of Green Thumbs in Montana is 66.8 years, with the oldest man 88 and the youngest 55.

Obviously, Green Thumb is a worthwhile project. Unfortunately, only 112 job slots are available in the 13 counties where the project is operative. It is hoped that Green Thumb can be expanded to include more workers in more counties, but for the present, it is limited to Blaine, Choteau, Fergus, Cascade, Pondera, Glacier, Lewis and Clark, Missoula, Powell, Silver Bow, Yellowstone, Musselshell and Mineral counties.

The program is intended primarily to benefit retired farm

workers, so the sponsor is the National Farmer's Union.

When funds are available, counties need only inquire to be included under the program. The men work on public projects for local agencies, such as local forest service offices, the department of public works, and others. The men do not take work away from other workers, but perform tasks that otherwise would go undone.

In Augusta, for example, Green Thumbs worked on Legion Park, painting buildings, benches and tables, doing repair work and building fence. They also worked on the community swimming pool, fire station, and youth center. Green Thumbs always work in or near their home communities.

A similar program for women, called Green Light, has not been funded in Montana.



NICK ANDERSEN — left, and Ray Northway, Green Thumbs.

Benefits Outpace Prices

Social Security Crucial to Health

The ever-expanding social security program is "absolutely crucial to the economic health of our society as well as the individual security of our citizens," according to Paul E. Webb, regional social security commissioner, who outlined the function of the program at the Governor's Conference on Aging.

In 1973, the first full year under the newly increased social security rates, the cash benefits paid out will total almost \$50 billion, he said.

Nationally, nine out of ten workers are in jobs covered by social security, and 28 million individuals get benefit checks each month.

In Montana, Webb pointed out, there are 99,000 social security beneficiaries who will collect a total of \$174 million in 1973. Under the 20 per cent increase recently granted, the average benefits of a single retired worker in Montana will go up to \$157 a month from \$131.

The average benefit to aged

widows in Montana will increase from \$115 to \$138, according to Webb. The 20 per cent increase will boost total benefits for Montanans to \$174 million next year, an increase of \$30 million.

Such boosts in benefits indicate to some extent the broadening of the concept behind social security, which originally was designed to provide only partial replacement for earnings lost when a worker retired, died, or become disabled, Webb said.

Twenty years ago, he pointed out, the program provided retirement and survivors protection only, and not much of that.

For example, Webb said, a man who retired in January 1952 at 65 with average earnings got a monthly benefit of \$57, contrasted to the \$190 received by individuals in the same category in January 1972. This is prior to the 20 per cent increase which raised total social security increases since January 1970 to 52 per cent. Prices have risen 11 per cent in the same time period, Webb said.

Such increases, however, have not raised social security to the point where it can meet all the basic needs of retired persons, according to Webb.

Social security benefits have always been intended only as a floor income to be supplemented by savings and other income, he asserted.

Besides boosting retirement benefits, social security has greatly expanded in scope. Disability payments became available in 1957. Survivors' protection was improved in two ways. First, benefits to student survivors between 18 and 21 became payable in 1965, and benefits to disabled widows and widowers as early as age 50 was approved in 1968.

Yet another important addition to social security, Medicare, was started in 1966.

With its expansions, Webb said, social security has been accepted as "the most important and successful experiment in social democracy in the history of our country." Proposed changes in the law, most of them under the sweeping welfare reform bill, H.R. 1 would change social security as follows:

—Retired workers would be allowed to earn up to \$2,000 while still receiving full social security benefits. Currently, retired workers can earn only \$1,680 without losing some benefits for each dollar of earnings. Under H.R. 1, retired workers making more than \$2,000 would lose one dollar in benefits for each dollar of earnings, but under no circumstances would he lose two dollars in benefits for every dollar of earnings.

—A widow who starts getting benefits at 65 would receive an amount equal to 100 per cent of the benefit her deceased husband would have got had he lived. Under current regulations, widows get 82.5 per cent of what their husbands would have got.

—The number of years used in computing benefits would become the same for men and women. The number of years used to determine average earnings for men runs up to 65 for men, 62 for women.

—Medicare would cover the cost of drugs used in treatment of such illness as diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, respiratory disease, kidney disease, arthritis, and cancer.

—Medicare would be extended to disabled persons who have been entitled to social security disability payments for two years.



PAUL E. WEBB

AUGUSTA MULTI-SERVICE CENTER

"INFORMATION AND REFERRAL"

A community center established July 5 in Augusta has put a new face on life for the 500 residents of the town.

Lacking medical and social services, a library, and many other amenities usually found in larger towns, Augusta residents have found in the center at least partial solutions to many of their problems, plus a better outlook for the future.

As of September 1, the center had received a total of 289 visitors and had referred 73 persons to various agencies. In the same period eight agencies made 31 visits to the center and consulted with 141 persons.

An informal poll of a random sample of the Augusta citizenry indicated strong community support for continuance of the center, with more service to more persons expected in the future, according to Suzy Holt, who helped start the center in her former job as an outreach worker for the Rocky Mountain Development Council.

RMDC agreed to fund the center for three months, after which it is scheduled to be financed by participating agencies.

Ms. Holt explained that the center was developed as a location where anyone with a problem could get referred to the proper agency.

A receptionist, Mary Allen, mans the center four hours daily, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. five days a week. She is prepared to deal with whatever questions come in. Usually, she said, she refers queries to an agency but at other times she is able to help people

herself. For example, she helped some retired persons determine whether they had received the correct amount in their pension checks following the social security increase.

Periodically, on a set schedule, representatives of various agencies come to the center to counsel individuals on their problems.

Agencies represented so far on the schedule include the County Health Department, County Welfare, County Extension, Soil Conservation, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation, Social Security, Legal Services, and Veterans' Affairs, and the FHA, with others expected to join soon.

Other projects are handled out of the center wherever the need is seen.

For example, a newsletter is published to compensate for the lack of a community newspaper. Books are available for loan through the center in cooperation with the State Library in Helena.

A hospital bed was obtained from County Health and put into storage until someone needs it,

and a wheelchair was provided to help Senior Citizens get around.

As communication in the community improved, residents began thinking about solving some of the long-standing problems of the area.

For example, an article in the *Grape Vine*, the newsletter sponsored by the center, asked whether Augusta should consider applying for a resident nurse and clinic, such as the one operated at Seeley Swan, near Missoula. Lincoln, another isolated community, obtained an ambulance recently, and it was suggested in the newsletter that Augusta might want to get one also.

Augusta currently has no doctor, but a public health nurse stationed in Lincoln visits the community on Thursday. How often she will be able to make it over Rogers Pass in winter remains to be seen.

At any rate, Augusta is better off than it was, and a lot of other communities are watching closely to see if the Augusta solution is for them.



MARY ALLEN, director of the Augusta Multi-Service Center, looks on as Social Service Supervisor Leone Wicks telephones a client, from the center.

A veteran with a GI mortgage who decides to sell his home will remain liable for default of payment by the buyer unless he gets a release of liability from the VA.

Health Hazard Found

Dangerous X-Ray Machines Fixed

A survey of about one-third of the 1,064 X-Ray machines used by Montana's medical practitioners last year found 144 to be non-compliant with state health standards.

The survey, conducted by the state health department's Occupational Health Bureau, found 210 deficiencies, many of which could have been hazardous to health, according to Treasure State Health, the departmental newspaper which printed the results of the survey.

Major faults discovered during the inspections were with beam filtration, collimation, and film development.

Beam filtration regulates the strength of the radiation hitting the subject. Too much filtration weakens the beam and requires re-taking of the X-Ray, possibly resulting in a radiation overdose.

Collimation regards the limiting of the rays to the portion of the body being examined. If collimation is faulty, a chest X-Ray, for example, might result in the body being exposed to radiation down to the mid-thigh.

Faulty development of film results in ruining X-Ray pictures, necessitating dangerous re-exposure of the patient. At least 24 of the faulty units were updated with

variable rectangular collimators. Larry Lloyd, chief of the bureau, said installation of the collimators would benefit over 15,000 patients a year.

Veterinarians' facilities were the worst offenders in X-Ray deficiencies, followed by chiropractors, medical doctors' office and hospitals, with dentists coming out as the safest practitioners.

Of the 346 units tested, all were brought into compliance except for three, which were dismantled, according to Lloyd.

Of the 137 hospital radiographic units inspected during 1971, four per cent of the fixed units and 33 per cent of the mobile units were found defective in beam filtration. Fourteen per cent of the fixed units and 49 per cent of the mobile units were in non-compliance on beam collimation.

With the 50 units inspected in doctors' offices and medical clinics, 14 per cent were non-compliant in beam filtration, 36 per cent in beam collimation and 13 per cent in darkroom thermometers, used to assure proper film development.

Of the 18 fixed radiographic units checked in chiropractors' offices, 17 per cent were non-compliant in beam filtration, 67 per cent were x-rated in beam collimation and 20 per cent of the darkrooms lacked thermometers.

Out of the 66 dental X-Ray units inspected, 11 per cent were deficient in beam filtration, 3 per cent in beam collimation and 35 per cent in darkroom thermometers.

The 7 units checked in veterinarians' facilities were found 50 per cent deficient in beam filtration and 33 per cent non-compliant in beam collimation. Half the darkrooms had no thermometers.



JUDGE HAS TALENT—Governor-Elect Thomas L. Judge demonstrated his acting ability during the Sun City Follies. He portrayed

a lawyer, and is pictured above explaining to Follies star Bruce Who that he is "taking a case to court."



CATHARINE McCARTY, Montana's Senior Citizen of the year of 1971, spoke her piece at the Governor's Conference.

Hundreds Attend 4th



ANNUAL BANQUET—Over 500 Senior Citizens



FOLLIES HIGHLIGHT—Kathy Danzer, Helena Charleston dancer, with Bruce Who, star of the Sun City Follies, the entertainment highlight of the Governor's Conference.



Governor's Conference



attend the banquet at the Governor's Conference.



JUSTICE SPEAKS OUT—Associate Justice Gene B. Daly of the Montana Supreme Court presides at the banquet during the Governor's Conference. From left, SRS Director Ted Carkulis, Mrs. Carkulis, and Earl R. Welty, the main speaker.



OPENS SHOW—Lyle Downing, Aging Services Division administrator, is shown officially opening the Sun City Follies during the Governor's Conference on Aging on September 12, 1972.



LUNCHEON SPEAKER—Paul E. Webb, Regional Social Security Commissioner, addresses Governor's Conference luncheon.

Real Problems, Possible Solutions

The full range of problems facing Senior Citizens and Senior Citizen Centers was confronted and perhaps brought closer to solution at a recent training session in Helena for Senior Center personnel.

One of the most serious problems for the centers — getting minority and isolated Seniors to participate in center activities — was treated at length.

Cliff Brennan, PhD., University of Montana social welfare professor, suggested that centers go all out to recruit members of ethnic minority and other outgroups to bring in other members of the group. For example, he said, if one or two Indians could be recruited into all white centers, they in turn could bring other Indian acquaintances into the center.

He pointed out that there is a continuing problem getting the poor, or other minorities to participate in center activities because the persons operating the center tend to attract other members like themselves. Brennan said Senior Center members usually are working class and lower middle class persons.

He noted that one center had failed because meetings were held in a mansion, where many old people felt uncomfortable because of the "ritzy" surroundings.

Isolated old men living obscurely in small apartments were rated as an especially difficult group to get involved in center activities. It was suggested that a special outreach project be considered to bring these old men into the centers.

Leonard Mashino of the Dillon Center said some of them "might have to be told to wash their necks first." It was then noted that many such men live in very poor dwellings and often have no bathing facilities, contributing to their

poor morale and isolation.

Edward Bates, a sociology teacher from Carroll College, said racism was the reason few Indians or blacks were found in Montana centers. Also, he said, racism is the reason Indians suffer "increasing dehumanization with encroaching age."

Considering the dehumanization racism brings on aging ethnic minorities, he said, "it may be a blessing that most blacks and Indians die before reaching 65." It was noted that some centers have a few Indian members, and some on or near reservations are all Indian, but most Indians do not get old enough to qualify for membership in Senior Centers.

Bates said racism faces ethnic minorities on every front. He said the Catholic Church "has been proselytizing over 100 years in Montana, but what has it done to educate the Indian?"

He said he himself was not innocent of the racist plague. "I've been racist so long I hate it in myself, he said.

He suggested a purge of racism would be a step toward integrating blacks and Indians into more centers.

Another speaker, Gerry Eklund of Ryegate, said center organizers should seek local support rather than outside help when possible. She said organizers should concentrate on their goal, and decide how best to achieve it through local organizations.

First, she said, you must determine who has power and influence in the community. Then you must contrive to get it on your side.

Power, she noted, sometimes rests in strange hands. In one community, she recalled, the only organized group was the rifle club, whose members were persuaded to undertake a project for community betterment.

Mrs. Eklund, helped organize 15 Senior Centers in Eastern Montana, plus the pioneering rural transportation project in Golden Valley County.

Dave Fuller of the OEO talked on "How to Influence the Influential." The first principle in influencing important persons, he said, is to involve them in the problem, perhaps by appointing them to an advisory board.

The second principal is the "soft-sell," including low key



SOCIAL WORKERS—Senior Citizens officers and state Aging Services Division personnel attending a training session for the center personnel in Helena.

for Senior Problems Hashed Out

maneuvers such as the publication of a newsletter spotlighting the useful activities of an agency. Not to be overlooked in this category is the social approach, such as having coffee with a legislator and discussing needs. Lobbying also fits in the second category.

If the first two categories produce no results, pressure group tactics become necessary. The early stages of pressure group tactics include mass mailing of individually written letters, mass telegrams, and presence in legislative galleries of "a lot of bodies with concern," Fuller said.

Picketing the powerful is the last step, he indicated. "Some influential people have to be shaken up" to move in the right direction, he said, adding, "I don't think Seniors are above some sort of informational picket."

Lyle Downing, Aging Services Director for the state, said the workshop was part of a program

to expand the Centers beyond the "fun and games" function they often serve in the beginning. He said there is considerable criticism of the centers at higher levels of government, often by "profound thinkers" who have never been to Montana and are unacquainted with Montana problems.

"The centers have got to be expanded," he said. "You don't need government funding to play cards."

New programs for the aged are

expected soon, Downing said, and these can best be handled through active centers.

Centers represented at the workshop included Helena, Augusta, Townsend, Butte, Anaconda, Drummond, Philipsburg, Dillon, Bozeman, and White Sulphur Springs. Livingston and Three Forks were invited also, but did not show.

Three or four more workshops will be held to cover the remainder of the state.

Training Session Successful

The officers of the ten centers attending the recent training workshop in Helena agreed almost unanimously that the workshop was about as useful as it could have been.

Nevertheless, unsigned evaluation forms turned in by participants at the conclusion of the two and-a-half day session indicated they did not agree on what was

most useful about the gathering.

Some said the session on administrative matters by Assistant Aging Services Administrator Jack Tucker was the most useful, and others said it was the most useless.

Some praised speakers Edward Bates of Carroll College and Cliff Brennan of the University of Montana, and others deplored them.

Small discussion groups also were rated variously as the most and least useful portion of the gathering.

Apparently, as one official said, there was something for everybody, which was one of the goals in setting up the workshop.

All but one Senior Citizen responding to the evaluation questionnaire expressed overall satisfaction with the project.

Thanks for Telling Us

At last we know, Earl R. Welty, aging services director from Missouri asked assembled Seniors at the Montana Governor's Conference on Aging how they wished to be referred to as a group. In Missouri, he said, oldsters prefer to be called "the aging," or "the elderly." A voice vote from the floor indicated old Montanans like to be called "Senior Citizens." Just as we suspected.



GETTING THE WORD—From left, are Assistant Aging Services Administrator Jack Tucker, Field Representative Vince Weggenman, Program Officer Steve McMahon, and SRS Staff Development Specialist Wayne Miller, at a training session in Helena for senior center personnel.

State Seniors Set Busy Tempo

The two months since the August-September SRS News have been busy for state Senior Citizens.

The TOBACCO VALLEY Senior Citizens Club purchased the Baptist Parish House and will be using it for their regular meeting hall.

The Senior Citizens of LINCOLN COUNTY had a "tall story day" at their potluck dinner in the Moose Hall.

The Senior Citizens of BIG TIMBER had a meeting where their guest speaker, John R. Cline of Helena, discussed Medicare.

The RYEGATE bus made it possible for Senior Citizens to go on shopping trips, hospital visits and medical appointments.

The POWDER RIVER COUN-

School Busses, School Lunches Interest Seniors

School and school facilities got more than their share of discussion at the Senior Center personnel training session held recently in Helena.

The assembled Seniors evinced particular interest in school busses and school lunch programs, which in many communities are the only public transportation and public feeding facilities in operation.

Under current law, the busses and hot lunch facilities are prevented from serving Senior Citizens. The message was clear enough. Change the laws, so that Senior Citizens who have been paying school taxes for 50 or 60 years get some return on their investment.

This idea was presented at both the Governor's Conference and the Helena training session, and those attending either went home with ideas on how to apply Senior Power to Congress and the Legislature.

TY Senior Citizens took a trip to tour St. Labre Mission at Ashland.

The BILLINGS Senior Citizens Center took 56 members on a bus trip to Yellowtail Dam and then on to the HARDIN Senior Citizens Center.

DRUMMOND Senior Citizens were entertained with group singing and movies on Girl Scouts at their regular get-together meeting.

The entertainment for the afternoon for the HYSHAM Senior Citizens was the presentation of slides and a tape covering a trip to Holland during the Tulip Festival season last April.

The Senior Citizens of ANACONDA took a circle bus trip from Anaconda to the Big Hole Battlefield, Salmon, Ida., and returned via Dillon.

Blind, deaf and partially deaf Senior Citizens are included in the fall program plans of the GREAT FALLS Senior Citizens Center. A lip-reading class for those with impaired hearing will begin in October through cooperation of

the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind. The program for the blind will be a two-way thing between blind persons and shut-ins who receive regular visits from Senior Citizen Center staff members or volunteers.

Two busses were chartered by the Senior Social Center of BOZEMAN to attend the "Holiday on Ice" performance in Butte.

Dr. Stephen A. Chilian gave a talk on nutrition to the HARLOWTON Senior Citizens.

Two carloads of MUSSELSHELL COUNTY Senior Citizens were luncheon guests of the WORDEN Senior Citizens Center along with groups from HARDIN, ABSAROOKEE, LAUREL, and BILLINGS.

The STILLWATER Senior Citizens Center in Absarokee held an open house in Mrs. Quinn's building.

Fifty RONAN Senior Citizens took a boat trip on Flathead Lake.

Senior Citizens of ANACONDA attended the "Holiday on Ice" in Butte's Civic Center.

New Senior Centers Boost Total

New Senior Centers in Anaconda, Eureka, Philipsburg, Polson, St. Ignatius, Augusta, and Charlo bring to 61 the total of federally funded centers in Montana. The new Anaconda Center is called the Smelter City Senior Citizens Center, and is operated by a different group than the original Deer Lodge County Senior Citizens Center in the same city.

Seven counties remain without federally funded centers. They are Toole, Liberty, Hill, Pondera, Chouteau, Petroleum, and Madison.

Some if not all of these counties are organizing centers.

Montana Aging Services Administrator Lyle Downing said

these centers are not federally funded "fun and games" facilities, but a nucleus in the community for administration of new programs for Seniors which are expected to come from Congress soon.

For example, the \$500,000 in nutrition funds for Montana which President Nixon recently vetoed is expected eventually to be reinstated. This money would be administered to communities according to need, through Senior Centers in the communities.

Health care for Seniors also gets a boost from the centers, which frequently serve as sites for testing to detect high blood pressure and diabetes.

96 Years of Adventure

Fighting Irishman Still Packs It

Patrick O'Sullivan started out "rebellious and unruly" almost 100 years ago, and hasn't got over it yet.

When he was 12 years old in his native Ireland, he came home with a stray dog one day, and his father ordered him to get rid of it. Now 96, and living in Missoula, he remembers he took the dog down the road to Queenstown, and didn't return for 15 months.

He signed on the "Tamir," a full rigged sailing ship and sailed around Cape Horn, where, he said, "I dropped the 'O' in the ocean and became ordinary seaman Pat Sullivan." Upon his return, he recalls, his father asked, "Did you put that dog away?"

REBELLIOUS AND UNRULY

Young Sullivan had plenty of schooling under private tutors, and at various formal schools, but his goal was to be a cowboy in America. Since he was too "rebellious and unruly" for an academic career, he headed for New York, on his way to becoming a cowboy.

Landing broke in New York, he decided to take up professional boxing, and took a severe beating in his first bout, but was paid \$2.00. "I bought a Porterhouse steak for \$1.95 and let the waiter have the nickel," he said.

Sullivan pursued the fight game to Butte, where there was plenty of opportunity. He later

realized his boyhood ambition when he was hired as a cowboy by the McNamara and Marlowe cattle ranch in Big Sandy.

In time, he grew restless, bought himself a roulette wheel in Seattle, and headed for the Yukon, in the gold rush of 1898. He carried the wheel over legendary Chilkoo Pass, and set it up at Dawson, where he acquired some partners. His gambling operation was successful, as the wheel "allowed us plenty of percentage," he said.

RABBIT ALL WINTER

He and his partners decided to go into gold mining. They struck it rich, and took many thousand of dollars in gold, although failing to lay in provisions for the winter. Snowbound, they were reduced to eating rabbit all winter long. "I never want to eat another rabbit as long as I live," Pat said.

He then moved to a warmer place and took up a new profession. He became a machine gunner in the Boer War in South Africa.

Captured by the British, he escaped through a tunnel and took a trip to Hong Kong. There, he hired on as a machine gun instructor for Chinese Mandarin officers.

After moving on again, he spent a long period of time traveling, and wound up in Mexico, where he hired his services out first to Emelio Zapata, then Pancho Villa, who paid better.

When he was through there, he materialized in Cairo, where he joined the French Foreign Legion just prior to World War I. With his considerable experience, he quickly worked up to First Lieutenant, and was awarded the Medal Militaire and the Croix de Guerre.

After that war, Sullivan went into business, first selling sewing machines, and then real estate, in

the Pacific Northwest. He retired when he was 83, and spent a lot of time, until recently, traveling. His traveling slowed up, he said, because his wife did not want to go anymore, "and it's no fun to go alone."

Where would he be if he was a young man today? "In Ireland," he said. "They put you on a rooftop with a machine gun and tell you to get the British soldiers when they come out. They pay real well, but you're bound to get caught, so they don't have to pay you. It's a real good deal — for them."

Sullivan spends a lot of time at the Missoula Senior Citizens Center in the summer, and "walking up and down the rug" in the winter.

The Senior Center, he said, is "a wonderful thing. A lot of these old people are not gifted with money. Without anyplace to go, they'd just sit home in their rockers and die. The center keeps them occupied."



PATRICK SULLIVAN

The SRS News is published every two months, and is available free to all Montana Senior Citizens. Those wishing to subscribe should write to Janis Luebr, Circulation Clerk, SRS News, Penkay Eagles Manor, 715 Fee St., Helena, Mt. 59601.

Three Montana Cities Have RSVP

Montana now has three active RSVP projects, one each in Helena, Bozeman and Missoula.

Helena has been in operation

No Tribal Income Used in Computing Welfare Eligibility

Tribal income will be disregarded when computing the eligibility of Indians under a new project designed in Montana by HEW.

Under the program all tribal income such as per capita, lease, trust land, judgement and dividend payments, will be disregarded for assistance eligibility purposes up to a maximum of \$2,500 per year per individual.

Non-tribal income such as employment earnings and social security benefits are not included in the project and will continue to be considered in determining eligibility.

The project is scheduled to last for three years. It is designed to allow development of uniform policies and regulations to deal with Indian income in a manner encouraging Indians to use their resources to their greatest advantage.

Before the project was begun, federal regulations required that all tribal income and resources had to be considered in determining welfare eligibility.

The project resulted after meetings between tribal leaders and state welfare personnel produced recommendations that the federal regulations be dropped for three years.

Anyone with a question on the program should write or call the project director, Ms. Edie Adams, at 449-2648, or Box 1723, Helena, MT 59601.

six month, and Missoula and Bozeman have hired directors and are under way.

The Helena project has over 90 retired senior volunteers manning 27 volunteer stations throughout the community. Volunteers handle telephone reassurance, Senior employment at the employment office, friendly visits at nursing homes and with shut-ins in their own homes.

At Mountain View Girls School in the Helena Valley, a male vol-



SENIOR AID—Sun City Follies, entertainment highlight of the 1972 Governor's Conference on Aging, had a profit of \$208 which went to the University of Montana Speech, Pathology and Audiology Department, to buy hearing aids for low-income elderly persons. The Follies was sponsored by the Helena Civitan Club. Six hundred dollars will be added to the Follies profits by the State Division of Aging Services. Shown from the right, Richards Merley, Helena Civitan President, presenting the check to Lyle Downing, center, State Aging Services Administrator, while William A. Macmillan, Civitan International Lieutenant Governor for the Intermountain Region, looks on.

unteer is helping the girls with math. Another volunteer delivers library books to shut-ins.

Within a few months, the Helena project will expand into Jefferson and Broadwater counties.

Helena RSVP director Linda Lindsay recently attended a regional conference for program directors in Denver, where project leaders from throughout the region compared experience and shared strategy.

Other communities now working toward RSVP grants are Anaconda, Billings, Butte, Great Falls, Havre, and ACTION for Eastern Montana, in Glendive.

Some of these are expected to be funded before the end of the year.

Foster Grandparents Spread to Glendive

The supremely successful Foster Grandparents Program, which has been operating at Boulder for four years, has now spread its good work to Glendive.

Ten Foster Grandparents are in action at the Eastmont Training Center in Glendive, working with 40 retarded children.

Foster Grandparents supervisor Jerry Hoover said the value of the program at Glendive "cannot be overestimated." He credited the Grandparents for pioneering the necessary attack on the stigma separating retarded persons from their communities.

The Grandparents "open the doors, let the light in the windows," he said, adding that they give the children a chance to gain self-confidence, and develop mentally and physically.

Administered by ACTION, the program allows persons over 60 to work 20 hours a week with children in institutions. Sixty Grandparents from Butte and Helena work with children in Boulder.

Accidents a Plague to the Aged

Twenty-six per cent of all accidental deaths last year happened to persons 65 and over, according to HEW publication called "Handle Yourself With Care," which warns Senior Citizens about various types of accidents with advice on how to avoid them.

Falls are cited as the leading cause of accidental deaths among the aged. To avoid them, the booklet says, elders should never have small rugs at the top or bottom of the stairs, or wear floppy slippers or unmended shoes. Frayed rugs should be mended or repaired, and top and bottom steps should be painted different colors, so users of the stairway will always be ready for the top or bottom step.

Other types of accidents are covered at length also. Burns, for example, are a common type of injury to Seniors, with more than 25 per cent of all deaths from fire and explosion affecting elders.

The accidental taking of the wrong medicine because of poor eyesight or other reasons is another common accident of elders. It can best be avoided by taking

medicine only at the recommendation of a doctor and by reading the label three times, twice before and once after taking. Never take medicine in the dark, never mix different types of pills in the same box, and don't put more than one kind of medicine at a time on your bedside table.

Walking, a popular exercise for Seniors, leads to the death of old people in 28 per cent of all pedestrian deaths.

Driving is dangerous for elders too. The 8.5 million drivers over

65 had more than 1 million auto accidents last year, according to the pamphlet.

Auto accidents, like other types of accidents, can often be prevented if the proper precautions are taken.

This booklet lists more precautions against every type of accident than can be listed here. Those wishing to get all the answers can send 30 cents to the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

Medicare Deduction Carries Over

Under the "carry-over" rule of the medical insurance part of Medicare, doctor bills for October, November, and December may in some cases count toward the \$50 deductible for both 1972 and 1973, according to Jack Sharp, social security district manager in Helena.

The medical insurance part of Medicare helps pay for doctor bills and a variety of other medi-

cal expenses of almost everyone 65 and over. Before payments from Medicare begin, the patient must meet the annual deductible—the first \$50 of covered medical expenses accumulated in a calendar year.

"The carry-over rule helps the Medicaid patient who might otherwise have to pay the \$50 deductible twice in a short period of time," Sharp said—"once at the end of one year, again at the beginning of the next year. Under the carry-over rule, doctor bills for October, November, and December which can be counted toward your \$50 deductible for 1972 can apply to the deductible for both 1972 and 1973."

Even if a Medicare patient hasn't met the 1972 deductible before October, he should send in all of his medical bills for covered services for the last 3 months of 1972, according to Sharp.

"The 'carry-over' amount will be credited to your deductible for 1973," he said.

The bills should be sent in with a Request for Medicare Payment form, available at most doctors' offices and all social security offices.



SENIORS FROM ALL OVER MONTANA enter and sign in on first day of the Governor's Conference.

Picture Brightens

Billings Leads in Transportation

Billings has taken the lead in providing transportation for Senior Citizens in Montana by offering free bus passes to all persons over 65.

Providing the free passes was a long time goal for Billings Mayor Willard Fraser, who received the first pass in September, shortly before his death.

The passes bear the seal of the city and the following legend: "In recognition of your contributions to our community, the city

of Billings is honored to present you this pass, entitling you to ride the city transit system as an active contributing member of our society."

The picture is less rosy in other communities, although reduced rate transportation for Seniors is becoming more popular.

In Sidney and Fairview, for example, persons over 65 with personal resources less than \$1,500, and income less than \$178 monthly are eligible for reduced rate

transportation, provided they also do not have more than \$12,500 equity in a home.

Depending on the individual's income, he would pay anywhere from \$0.50 to \$1.25 for a one-way trip from Fairview to Sidney, a distance of 12 miles.

The project is supported by the Sidney taxi service, the Richland county commissioners, the county welfare department, and ACTION for Eastern Montana.

In Hamilton, the Ravalli Senior Citizens Association is subsidizing a limited number of taxi trips by Seniors on Medicaid not only to benefit the Seniors but to keep the taxi service in business.

The Senior Citizens Association will reimburse the taxi company \$1.50 for each round trip. Seniors on Medicaid (not Medicare) are subsidized only for trips to essential medical, dental or optical appointments, plus one trip every two weeks for grocery shopping.

It is uncertain how long this service will be continued.

Medicare does not pay for the first three pints of blood received in a benefit period, but the recipient will not have to pay for them if he can arrange to replace them.

Most men over 65 are married, but most women are not.

'Death With Dignity' Debated

A recent hearing by the Senate Committee on Aging was unable to determine if terminally ill persons have a right to "Death with Dignity."

Expert witnesses including doctors, lawyers, a minister and a psychiatrist, offered conflicting testimony on the definition of death, the criteria for "hopeless and incurable" illness, and offered diverse opinions on whether government should have the power to control "the right to die."

One physician said he allowed terminally ill patients to die, while another opposed anything "less than the maximum effort to save any patient."

A psychiatrist, Dr. Elisabeth

Kubler-Rose, author of "On Death and Dying," urged a re-ordering of priorities in institutions which "crush the dignity and comfort of the patient to save his life."

Numerous elderly persons testified on both sides. Gertrude Clark, 78, advocated a "living will," which she as signed in an effort to achieve death with dignity. She urged uniform federal laws to honor a will directing discontinuation of medical treatment in advanced stages of terminal illness.

The chairman of the committee, Senator Frank Church of Idaho, said the testimony heard would be considered, and indicated there might be further hearings later.

Address all communications to Aging Services Division, 715 Fee St., Helena, Montana 59601



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